



## **ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES**

August 21, 2018

DNR Traverse City Customer Service Center

#### **ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (AAC)**

##### **PRESENT**

Scott Norris, Chair  
Tom Jones, Vice-Chair  
Ken Buchholtz  
Vendela Collins  
Neal McKenzie  
Sarah Peurakoski  
Will Purves  
Bryan Wilkinson  
Kimberly Woolridge

##### **ABSENT**

Al Bobrofsky  
Cindy Burkhour  
Jonathon Edgerly  
Michael Harris  
Justin Lippe

#### **PRESENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR)**

Sharon Schafer, AAC Executive Sponsor  
Stacy Welling Haughey, Upper Peninsula Field Deputy/U.P. Sponsor  
Michael Holsinger, ADA Coordinator  
Yolanda Taylor, Assistant to the AAC

#### **PRESENT FROM THE DNR ACCESSIBILITY TEAM (A-TEAM)**

Lynne Thoma, Fisheries  
Christie Bayus, Grants Management (A-Team Chair)  
Tamara Jorkasky, Grants Management (A-Team Co-Chair)  
Jami Selden-Manor, Law Enforcement  
Kirk Lapham, Legislative and Legal Affairs  
David Haupt, Marketing and Outreach  
Diana Engle, Michigan History Center  
Mike Evanoff, Parks and Recreation  
Sara Cummins, Wildlife

#### **INTERPRETERS**

Kim Crump and Jeff Plaxco

#### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Charlotte Kiefer, Host and DNR Mid-Michigan Area Manager, Finance and Operations  
Rebecca Powell, Department of Civil Rights

## **REGULAR MEETING**

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Scott Norris called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with roll call and introductions around the room. He reported that members of the council and the accessibility team went on some tours yesterday. He thanked Yolanda for coordinating the tour of the Platte River Fish Hatchery and the interactive adaptive kayaking and cycling demos at Interlochen State Park, as well as making lodging arrangements and organizing a group dinner at the hotel. Members that participated in the kayaking and cycling programs at Interlochen expressed how much fun they had at the park, and how nice it was to have dinner with everyone so they could interact on a personal level.

Charlotte Kiefer, the area manager, took pictures of the events at Interlochen State Park and shared them with the group in a slide show prior to the start of the meeting. Charlotte welcomed the group to Traverse City. Chair Norris thanked Charlotte and her staff for hosting the council at this newer Customer Service Center in Traverse City.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Norris asked the council if they had any additions, corrections or discussion regarding the May 1, 2018 Minutes. No corrections, edits or discussion was offered.

*Chair Norris requested a motion to approve the May 1, 2018 Minutes; Sarah Peurakoski motioned to approve the Minutes; Vendella Collins seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried, and the May 2018 Minutes were approved.*

### **WELCOME TO TRAVERSE CITY**

Dayna Valpey, Director of Development for the Disability Network of Northern Michigan (DNNM), welcomed the group to Traverse City. She gave them a brief overview/presentation of the services and opportunities that are offered by the Centers for Independent Living (CIL) around the state. There are 15 CILs in Michigan, and the DNNM itself serves 17 counties in northern Michigan.

Their work supports individuals with disabilities, families and other support systems of individuals with disabilities, as well as communities, businesses and organizations in key life areas such as accessibility, education, assistive technology, health care, housing, recreation, transportation and so on. Their services are customized and tailored to the identified need of the individual and/or community, and their staff work with and collaborate with community agencies to connect individuals to the appropriate services (i.e. employment services, local interpreter services, information and assistance, etc.).

Their "Access for Everyone" campaign is led by local individuals to ensure everyone can actively work, play and live in their community. They also help raise funds to assist with the purchase of mobi-mats, water wheelchairs, and other adaptive equipment or technology. The DNNM also has a program called "Learning Independence from Experience" (LIFE) that focuses on preparing high school students with disabilities for life after they graduate from high school. The LIFE program started out 15 years ago with just four schools and 30 students and has expanded to 11 counties serving almost 1,000 students. They work closely with Michigan Rehabilitative Services for this program.

Dayna welcomed everyone to contact her directly, or any other CIL around the state, if they need assistance or would like to promote one of their programs. For example, the MiOFO free tracked chair giveaway essay contest was posted to the southern Michigan CIL website where

they currently have over 4,000 followers. A list of all the CILs around the state and their contact information can be found at [www.dnmichigan.org](http://www.dnmichigan.org).

## **PURE MICHIGAN**

Kelly Wolgamott, Director of Travel Marketing, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, gave a presentation on the Pure Michigan campaign, to include their accessibility plan and other initiatives. Recently, Kelly met with the department's accessibility team and is pleased to be at today's council meeting. She welcomed all ideas and suggestions as she moved through her presentation.

She presented information about their campaign efforts, how they measure the success of each campaign, and what they are planning to do in future campaigns. From a national standpoint, Michigan is well recognized. It comes in second to Illinois, but Illinois is famous for Chicago. Based on their campaign efforts, over 50% of people surveyed were familiar with Michigan on a regional basis; 26% nationally. She also showed results of other ratings where Michigan is well known for its outdoor scenery and recreational opportunities, and it attracts the largest percentage of its international travel interest from Asian countries. Michigan brought in \$2 billion in total international spending in 2016.

In addition to the television campaign, they also have a passion campaign which is all digital. In 2018, their campaigns included "Snow Day," (i.e. all the things you can do in the winter), Golf, Lake Effect, Nature Trails, Urban DNA and Scenic Route, as well as their summer campaign, which is the largest campaign, called Long Live Summer.

Kelly also reported to the group that they have on-going monthly conference calls with the DNR, which includes members from the department's accessibility team, to promote programs, initiatives or ideas, and elevate their efforts. It helps them understand what needs to be incorporated into their campaigns. These monthly calls have strengthened the partnership between Pure Michigan and the DNR, and they have also helped them understand the need for promoting accessible outdoor recreation.

She mentioned they also work with a Travel Commission and, as part of their strategic plan on accessibility for the travel industry overall, it has become an item of focus as well.

The council and others present shared numerous ideas, thoughts and suggestions with Kelly on how they can and should incorporate people with disabilities enjoying recreational activities and the outdoors in future campaigns. Kelly wrote down all suggestions and ideas that were offered and was very thankful to the council and others for their input. She hopes to return to the drawing board with plans to incorporate people with disabilities into future campaigns. In the meantime, she encouraged council members to continue sending their ideas, comments and suggestions to her.

The Pure Michigan/Travel Michigan website is [www.michigan.org](http://www.michigan.org).

## **CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION**

Maia Turek, Resource Development Specialist, Parks and Recreation, gave the council an overview of the upcoming 100-year anniversary of Michigan's state parks, the Centennial Celebration. The goal is to take a snapshot of where we've been, where we are now, and where we want to go into the future, to include how far we have come in providing accessible recreation. She reviewed the phases and the timeline of events, with the first launch occurring in November of this year. She also informed the council on ways they can get involved, participate in events and contribute to the fund-raising events.

As with the Pure Michigan campaign, council members and others shared numerous ideas and suggestions with Maia. Maia thanked everyone for their input and encouraged them to contact her with any additional comments or suggestions.

Kim Woolridge told Maia she would like to work with her on some ideas for the 30-year anniversary of the ADA.

### **DNR RECREATION GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Tamara Jorkasky, chair of the accessibility team's Grant Application, Project and Program Review subcommittee, announced that she has been asked to speak on behalf of council member, Cindy Burkhour, chair of the AAC's Infrastructure and Natural Resource Programs subcommittee, who sends her apologies that she could not attend this meeting.

Tamara explained to the council that they will be receiving brief presentations on the following Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant applications and proposed projects:

Michigan Historical Center (Sandra Clark & Sandra Franz):

TF18-0183 Renovations to the Pigeon River Country Discovery Center

DNR Parks and Recreation Division (Matthew Lincoln):

TF18-0056 Belle Isle Park Picnic Shelter Replacement

DNR Marketing and Outreach Division (Jon Spieles):

TF18-0064 Saginaw Bay Visitor Center Renovation

Tamara further explained that all grant applications and proposed projects have been vetted through an accessibility review and input process involving the grant applicants, representatives from the department's internal subcommittee, respective division representatives, and the AAC's Infrastructure and Natural Resources Program subcommittee. Information and materials were also shared with all members of the council for their review and input as well.

Based on the input received from this review process, all scope items within each application has been revised to incorporate changes that will exceed the minimum requirements of the ADA.

Presenters included:

- Sandra Franz, Pigeon River Country Discovery Center Steering Committee;
- Matthew Lincoln, Grant Coordinator and Land Liaison, DNR Parks and Recreation Division; and
- Jon Spieles, Field Manager, DNR Marketing and Outreach Division.

After giving their presentations and entertaining questions about each project, Chair Norris asked the council if they would be willing to make a motion in support of all trust fund grant applications and projects presented.

*Council member Vendella Collins motioned, in support of all applications, that:*

- *The Accessibility Advisory Council (Council) acknowledges that all three grant applications and proposed projects listed are designed above and beyond the minimum standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA);*

- *All three grant applications and proposed projects meet the acceptable scoring criteria for accessibility;*
- *The applicants sought input from individuals with a disability or disability advocates, affecting the final design;*
- *The Council supports and endorses all projects and grant applications listed; and*
- *The Council recommends that the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board approve all grant applications and projects listed.*

*Kimberly Woolridge seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried. The Council endorses all three grant applications and projects listed above, they are in full support and highly recommend approval of all three projects by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board at their December 2018 meeting.*

Sharon Schafer commented that this grant application review process with the accessibility team and council members is proving to be a valuable resource and it also assists with getting these grants approved. This year they received \$89 million in requests, so this input helps make these applications stronger by scoring higher. The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board will make their decision at their December meeting. The grants awarded will be reported at the next council meeting.

## **DEPARTMENT UPDATES**

### Executive Updates

Sharon Schafer reported that Dean Molnar, the assistant chief for Law Enforcement, will be retiring after 29 years with the department. Also, the Executive Team is diligently working on transition documents for the new Governor and the new administration, which includes information about this council.

As previously reported, Senate Joint Resolution O and Senate Bill 763 were bills that were making proposed changes to the State Park Endowment Fund and the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. Those bills passed the Senate and they are now pending in the House. They are hopeful there will still be activity on those bills during the lame duck session, but Sharon will report back to the council at the next meeting.

### ADA Coordinator Updates

Mike Holsinger, the department's ADA Coordinator, informed the council that postcards were created that direct people to the department's accessible recreation website. Postcards were distributed to all members, and they were recently distributed at the Upper Peninsula State Fair.

As previously mentioned, the department was approached by Callie's Cure. They donated funds to the department for the purchase of five tracked chairs. The agreement has been finalized, the tracked chairs have been purchased, and they are housed at Waterloo Recreation Area, Tahquamenon Falls State Park, Muskegon State Park, Belle Isle State Park, and Maybury State Park. The tracked chairs can be reserved on-line.

Mike also reported he is keeping a log of ADA complaints/responses so that the department has a history of these complaints. A recent complaint involved Fort Mackinac on Mackinac Island. A gentleman brought his father to the fort and was not familiar with the fact that a person can request a horse drawn carriage to take them to the main entrance (which is uphill). The person in the booth at the bottom of the fort/hill also was not familiar with this procedure. They intend to post this information for future visitors. The group asked if there was a charge for this service. This should be an accommodation and people should not be charged. Sharon and Mike will research this, talk to the Director of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, and

report back. In the meantime, the fort will set up a booth at the bottom of the hill where they will post this information.

Sara Peurakoski commented that she is taking a group of 50 veterans and their families to the island next month. She will provide feedback on how her group handled this situation.

Also, Mike Evanoff reported there were a couple of concerns expressed about beach access at Warren Dunes and Sterling State Parks. Mike did a site assessment at Sterling State Park but has not had a chance to do an assessment at Warren Dunes. Mike will report back on his findings.

#### A-Team Updates

Christie Bayus, chair of the department's accessibility team, reported that the department's training subcommittee is reviewing old training materials and working towards developing new training modules for all employees that address the ADA and accessibility.

She also commented that the Brain Injury Association is having their annual conference in Lansing on September 13 and they have asked for the department's presence. Two members of the accessibility team will be present to answer questions about accessible recreation and pass out the new postcards.

The department was also approached by a travel blogger (with over 50,000 followers) that focuses on accessibility. His site is called Curb Free with Cory Lee. He does videos and blogs highlighting places that are accessible. He was looking for suggestions from the department and Muskegon State Park was recommended.

### **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

#### Vacancies/Process

Chair Norris reported there are three vacancies on the council. He reiterated that council members need to seek out and recommend people or organizations that would be good representatives on the council. If they find someone that is interested, they can get in touch with Yolanda for an application. The person or organization should fit into the dynamics of the council and there should not be any overlap in representation.

#### Subcommittees

Chair Norris reminded council members that they should volunteer to be a participant on a subcommittee if they are not already assigned to one. Yolanda will send a list of the subcommittees to the council.

#### Council Updates

Chair Norris reported that the IMLS grant for the Michigan History Center has been abandoned for a variety of reasons, mostly due to timeline and lack of funds. However, they also came up with another option. A company called Boni makes a product called Loud Steps. They come in and digitally map the facility using your existing wi-fi/network system. They then send this map to Apple to incorporate it into the Loud Steps program. They will investigate this program further and report back.

Vendela Collins commented that she was recently at the Gaylord National Harbor where they use the Loud Steps program. She said it was a very helpful program that can be used by anybody.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Les Crump, visitor, asked if the department is looking into better methods of providing and accessing hunting/fishing licenses, especially if they have been lost. Examples would include accessing your license through a mobile app, a bar code that can be scanned on your iPhone, or a sticker that can be placed on the back of your driver's license. Sharon Schafer responded that the department is in the process of bidding out the licensing system and these options are being considered. They are trying to make licenses more easily accessible with today's technology.

## **CLOSING BUSINESS**

Kim Woolridge announced she is currently the interim state ADA Coordinator since Sharon Ellis' retirement in July. The State ADA Compliance office is having meet and greets with other state department's ADA coordinators and internal partners on August 28 and September 13, from 9:30 to 11:30, both days, at 110 Michigan Avenue 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, in Lansing. For external partners (i.e. disability groups, community groups, etc.), the dates are September 11 and October 9, same location, same times. If anyone is interested in attending, they should RSVP to Kim's assistant, Kelly Frake at [frakek@michigan.gov](mailto:frakek@michigan.gov). They would love to hear about and share challenges and successes regarding access to state facilities, websites, programs and state services.

Tom Jones reported that the youth tracked chair essay contest winner was an 11-year old boy with spina bifida named C.J. Minks. They also included the snowplow that goes with the tracked chair so he can plow his parents, grandparents and neighbor's driveways. The day they dropped off the tracked chair, there were about 50 family members present having a barbeque. They were extremely thankful for the tracked chair donation and continue to report how much this has changed his life.

Yolanda reminded everyone to grab some accessibility postcards on their way out. The next council meeting is scheduled for December 4 at the Lansing Customer Service Center in Lansing.

## **ADJOURN**

Chair Norris asked if there were any further comments. No additional comments were offered. He then asked for a motion to adjourn.

*Kim Woolridge motioned for adjournment; Sara Peurakoski seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at noon.*

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